

# Ames Historical Society

AMES • IOWA

## Newsletter to Members 2017 SUMMER...ISSUE #3/4

*Discovering our history,  
Preserving our past,  
Sharing our stories.*



The Annual Benefit will be reminiscent of a WWII-era USO.

### Ames Historical Society Board:

**Co-President** Sharon Wirth  
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*The Board meets the 2nd Thursday of each month 7pm at 416 Douglas. Members welcome!*

### Staff:

**Executive Director** Casie Vance  
**Research & Media Specialist** Alex Fejfar  
**Collections Mgr./Volunteer Coord.** Hannah Frederick

### Emeritus Staff:

Alan Spohnheimer, Margaret Vance, Dennis Wendell

Ames Historical Society is an incorporated, 501c3 not-for-profit organization whose mission is to engage our diverse public and provide unique opportunities to learn about Ames history.

**Headquarters:** 416 Douglas, Ames, IA 50010  
**Hours** Tue. – Sat. 10 am - 4 pm  
**Mail:** PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010  
**Phone:** 515-232-2148  
**E-mail:** info@ameshistory.org  
**Website:** www.AmesHistory.org  
**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/ameshistoricalsociety

The **newsletter** is published four times a year for AHS members. Direct comments and questions to: Editor, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010 or e-mail above. Editor: Kathy Svec

**Hoggatt School** is located on the grounds of Meeker School near 18th and Burnett, Ames, Iowa. Open Sundays in 2017, June 4 to August 13, 2-4 pm and by appointment. April to October. Closed November to March.

## Please Join Us! Annual Benefit to Feature “Heroes Among Us”

The Annual Benefit will continue the 1940s theme set by the current exhibit at the Ames History Center:  
**WW II: Ames Doing Its Part.**

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Members have received their mailed invitations to an evening that will celebrate this important period in Ames history.  
Forties-era costumes are encouraged!

Reservations due Aug. 14 may also be made online at [www.ameshistory.org](http://www.ameshistory.org).  
Open to the public – friends and family welcome.

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**Saturday, August 26, 2017**

Social 5:30 pm, Dinner 6:00 pm, Program Following  
2400 Oakwood Road at City Church, Ames, Iowa  
\$60 per person

*All proceeds assist the Ames Historical Society in fulfilling its mission.*



Iowa State University theater professor and historian, **Jane Cox**, will present a staged reading of the World War II experiences of Iowa veterans from her stage play and book, *Heroes Among Us*.

First performed in ISU's Fisher Theater in 2001, *Heroes Among Us* related the wartime experiences of twelve veterans on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

For the benefit, the stories of three veterans will be performed by Iowa State theater students, directed by Cox:

Robert Underhill (B-17 bombardier), played by Michael Clinkscales  
Harold “Curly” Norris (101<sup>st</sup> Airborne), played by Alexander Criswell  
Ruth Miller (Army nurse), played by Erin Stein



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The annual Farwell T. Brown Award will also be presented to recent past Board member and Co-President, Kathy Svec.

The live auction of unique community experiences will include Iowa State basketball tickets, a home art consultation, dinner at The Roosevelt and a plane ride donated by Haps Air Service, along with other great community experiences.

**We hope to see you there!**

# History Talks Accompany WWII Exhibit

## WORLD WAR II: AMES DOING ITS PART

The current History Center exhibit, *WW II: Ames Doing Its Part*, features stories about day-to-day life in Ames from 1941-1945 for those who stayed at home and supported the war effort in countless ways. On view through September 27, Tue-Sat, 10 am - 4 pm.

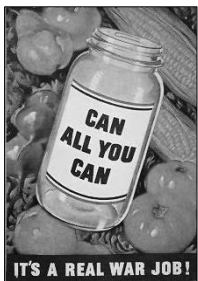
### WW II Exhibit History Talks

The following History Talks will enrich information about the WW II home front. All will take place at the Ames Public Library auditorium; free/open to the public.

Tuesday, August 29, 7 pm

#### **The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1940-45**

*By Lisa Ossian, Des Moines Area Community College*



Lisa Ossian divides Iowa's home front contributions into farm, production, community and kitchen. Learn about Food for Freedom, the "Arsenal of Democracy" and the Iowa ordnance plants that produced bombs and ammunition. Towns and cities exceeded records in eight war bond drives as well as scrap drives for metal, paper and rubber. Iowa's women met rationing and production requirements in home kitchens.

Tuesday, September 26, 7 pm

#### **Working with the Enemy: German, Italian and Japanese Prisoners of War in Iowa WWII**

*By Chad Timm, Assoc. Prof. Education, Simpson College*



With the successful 1942 Allied campaign against Adolf Hitler's Afrika Corps, the number of enemy prisoners of war that needed internment grew dramatically. Eventually

there were more than 500 camps in the U.S. including two in the state of Iowa in Algona and Clarinda. Learn about camp life, community relations, the POW labor program, branch camps in 30 Iowa communities and the arrival of Japanese prisoners at Camp Clarinda in early 1945.

*Presented in partnership with Ames Public Library. Supported by the Ames Convention & Visitors Bureau Community Grant Program. August and September programs made possible by Humanities Iowa and the National Endowment for the Humanities*

### Follow Up: B17 Bomber Talk

As often happens at our lectures, audience members speak up and provide new information.



At the July 25 talk by Matt Donovan on the 1944 crash of a B-17 bomber in Story County, a resident from Maxwell, Iowa announced that a memorial plaque to the crew that perished is being erected at the crash site.

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A 93-year old Maxwell woman who attended also shared her personal story:

"In 1943, my sister Mildred and I graduated from Maxwell High School. We lived about 2 miles east of Maxwell on a farm with our parents and siblings. Mildred and I went to work at the Ordnance Plant in Ankeny, IA working the night shift.

One night in 1944, as we were going to the car to go home at approximately 5:00 am, we heard a plane flying very low. We commented to each other how low the plane was flying and wondered if it was in trouble.

On the way home, the radio announced there was a plane crash near Maxwell. We went to the area of the crash. Mildred took pictures with her camera; however, Army personnel took the camera and never returned it.

We saw holes in the ground made from the crash; some looked like they were made from bodies hitting the ground. We found an Army jacket hanging on a fence but left it hanging there for Army personnel. We felt very sorry for the victims. Since Army personnel were present, we left the scene."

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Ames resident, Jim Dresser shared a copy of an article in the September 2017 Aviation History magazine about an Ames High Class of 1938 graduate, John H. Hug.

Hug was a pilot who earned his wings in 1943. He was first a trainer, then was trained himself on the newly developed long-distance B-29s. The first missions against Japan were flown from China, over the infamous "Hump" - the Himalayas. Hug said, "I flew three missions from China - one was 4,000 miles, 19 hours, 25 minutes." In 1944, the U.S. took the Mariana Islands and Hug's bomb group moved there. Hug flew many missions against Japan, and was part of a B-29 flyover of the surrender in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. Hug stayed in the reserves and had an illustrious career in weather reconnaissance.

## Local Stories – WW II Era

### World War II and the Railroads

*This is the third in a series of World War II stories presented in conjunction with the current exhibit at the History Center.*

World War II had a dramatic impact upon the United States and its railroads. Since commerce in Ames was heavily dependent on the railroad, whatever affected the railroads, affected Ames.

War production from 1940-41 ended mass unemployment, added six million workers to payrolls and created an industrial boom. Americans united to battle enemies on three continents and the federal government marshaled resources for an Allied victory.

The railroads united the nation's economy and enabled it to produce and deliver war materiel, responding to unprecedented demand. Unlike during WWI when the government took control, the nation's railroads remained privately owned and managed during the conflict.

Advisory agencies such as the Interstate Commerce Commission guided the railroads under the Office of Defense Transportation.

In December 1941, the U.S. had 41,000 locomotives, two million freight cars and 7,500 Pullman sleepers. The government requested having 65% of all passenger cars at its disposal.



Rationing of gasoline, tires and parts affected airline, bus and truck companies. German U-boats disrupted shipping through the Panama Canal and along the eastern seaboard. Railroads were the only viable alternative and carried 83% of the traffic increase between 1941 and 1944, moving 91% of all military freight and 98% of all military personnel.

Railroads were a central part of life during the war years. Families sent their "children" off to war from the

railroad station and greeted them there when they returned. At times Western Union telegraphers had the grim task of notifying families that their soldier or sailor was wounded or killed in battle -- or the good news that he or she was coming home.

Freight traffic soared:

1940: 373 billion ton miles

1940: 43,542,619 revenue-freight tons

1943: 62,181,898 revenue-freight tons

1944: 737 billion ton miles

1945: 59,384,215 revenue-freight tons

Passenger volume soared, despite the transfer of sleeping cars to troop transport:

1940: 23 billion revenue-passenger miles

1940: 18,446,428 passengers

1943: 87 billion passenger miles; 28,897,673 passengers

1944: 95 billion revenue-passenger miles

1945: 30,586,195 passengers

### The C&NW Railroad



To maintain its workforce depleted by enlistments and the draft, the Chicago and North Western encouraged employees to postpone retirement, asked some retirees to return and sought high school-aged boys, Mexican nationals and women.

C&NW maximized efficiency with the fewest workers. The new streamliners demonstrated that dieselization could enhance operations. From 1941 - 1945, 79 diesel switch engines were acquired, launching the diesel revolution.

For efficiency, trains took the shortest routes and did not move freight cars unless they could be loaded to capacity and unloaded quickly - practices that needed precise coordination. Unloading - especially of troops - was done at night. In 1943, a troop train was filled and left a station every six minutes.

Anything that could move safely was pressed into service to haul passengers or cargo. More than 2,500 troop trains moved soldiers and carried about 100,000 service personnel/per day. In 1944, the Pullman Company loaded a sleeping car every three minutes. A division of 15,000 men with equipment needed 65 trains (1,350 cars). An armored division took 75 trains (28 to 45 cars).

The only new cars constructed during the war years were 1,200 troop sleeping cars and 400 kitchen cars for

## Local Stories – WW II Era

troop trains. The military also equipped and maintained hospital trains.

Sharing or abandoning track also produced efficiencies and salvageable metal, though overburdened laborers were affected and a strike was threatened – settled in January 1944 with raises and other benefits.

C&NW earned substantial - though declining - profits during the conflict; Net income:  
 \$25,660,000 for 1942  
 \$22,955,000 for 1943  
 \$16,108,000 for 1944  
 \$15,084,000 for 1945

In 1943, railroads paid over \$1,850,000,000 in taxes, supporting the war effort. In 1945, taxes paid amounted to over \$6 million/day. Unlike World War I when railroads were a government burden, railroads became revenue generators for defense.

WW2 solved the C&NW's financial problems and reduced competition. With the end of depression-era bankruptcy in 1944, a new day dawned for C&NW. Solidly in the black, free from court supervision and handling a comfortable level of debt, the company resumed dividend payments in 1944 on its new issue of stock.

Following the victory in Europe in May 1945, the government turned to the fight against Japan. Military personnel in Europe were brought home and sent by rail to the Pacific Coast. When the war ended sooner than expected, as many service personnel as possible were brought home by Christmas 1945.

The trains brought millions of America's young men and women home to their families, victory celebrations and the promise of a new life after the war. By spring 1946, the major troop train movements of World War II became history.

The growth of the U.S. railroad network enabled America to become an "Arsenal of Democracy". They brought the Allies victory as much as any army and were "The Lifeline of the Nation."

In 1942, the U.S. was the only Ally that combined natural resources and industrial capacity. Australia and the Soviet Union had resources, but they were remote and neither had the rail network needed to bring the war materiel into large-scale production and deliver it where needed. Only the U.S. and to some degree Canada, could do so efficiently and in quantities enough to win the war. The railroads of Canada and the United States had their finest hour in the fight for freedom against European and Asian dictators.



### Friendship Train

After World War II ended, the French began rebuilding their ravaged nation and were in great need of everyday necessities. A Washington newspaperman suggested that America come to their aid with a "Friendship Train."

Newspapers across the country promoted the project and over \$40 million dollars' worth of supplies were collected. \$100,000 worth of food was given by Iowans, the largest contribution by any state.



Ames exceeded its \$10,000 goal by raising \$15,780 in cash and food from donors in the city, Iowa State, Story County and other central Iowa communities.

The Friendship Train departed from Los Angeles and headed to New York, gathering cars filled with donations on its cross-country journey. On November 13, 1947 one of the largest crowds ever to gather in Ames for a civic activity - around 5,000 - met the train. Two carloads of evaporated milk and two of flour were added in Ames.

By the time the train reached NYC, there were 169 cars. Donations from other areas brought the total to 700 boxcars of food, fuel, medicine and clothing that were shipped, arriving in France on December 18, 1947.

In 1949, France reciprocated with the Merci Train, a group of 49 French train cars loaded with gifts, one car for each state. Iowa's Merci Train car is at Antique Acres in Cedar Falls, displaying several dozen of the original gifts.

## Upcoming Events and Society News

### More Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for these Society events:

- **August 18-October 28:** Pieced Fabric: Historic Quilts of Ames exhibit (see next page)
- **August 26:** Annual Benefit Dinner, Oakwood Road Church (see page one)
- **September 24:** Annual Octagon Art Festival Open House at the History Center
- **October 27:** Main Street Cultural District Trick-or-Treating Open House
- **December 2:** Old-Fashioned Christmas at the History Center, 11 am - 2 pm

### Society Wish List

Very grateful thanks go to Vicki Sivesind and Dorian Stripling for a high quality professional level mat cutter, for socket wrench sets from Jim Dresser and George Burnet, for donations toward a new copier from Neal Tarman, David Smith and Bob Bourne, for two printers from Tom Smith and for office supplies from Wendy Livy. We are so pleased!

Other wishes:

- Computer printer paper
- Funds for archival boxes (approximately \$13 each)
- Ames photos from 1960s (largely missing from Ames Tribune archive)
- Ongoing subscription to newspaperarchive.com (6 months - \$99.95)
- Office and building supplies: sticky notes, pens, tall kitchen trash bags, glass cleaner, tissues, etc.
- Donations toward printing the new Campustown walking tour brochure in color

Let us know if you can help by calling 515-232-2148 or emailing [info@ameshistory.org](mailto:info@ameshistory.org).

### News briefs

- **Hallway exhibits** at the History Center are:
  - Stevens Block on Main Street
  - Artifacts from the Attic: Dolls
  - ACTORS history
  - A City Afloat: Floods of the 1990s
- Join the 2,038 people who **"like"** us on Facebook. The historical photos that appear each week in the Ames Tribune are posted on our Facebook page. We enjoy the reactions and comments!
- Investigate how your **purchases** through Amazon Smile can benefit the Society.
- New carpeting, stair treads and paint improved the **appearance** of the second floor at 416 Douglas, installed and assisted by staffer, Alex Fejfar.

### Hoggatt School Activities

Hoggatt School's summer Sunday open hours are quickly drawing to a close. The final activities and open house programs are:

**August 6: 1860s Game Day, 2-4 pm**

**August 13: Open House, 2-4 pm**

After Aug. 13, the school is open by appointment for group tours through October 31 (call 515-232-2148). Hoggatt School is located at 18<sup>th</sup> and Burnett in Ames.



Shannon Bardole (left) demonstrated soap-making.



Game Day provided lively outdoor activities....



... and old-fashioned indoor games.



## A Graceful Passing

Long-time Ames resident, Grace Amemiya, is featured in the current History Center exhibit, *WW II: Ames Doing Its Part*. A Japanese-American, Grace and her family were placed in an internment camp during the war. She had long-since forgiven her captors and was well-known in Ames for her talks that shed light on this regrettable chapter of American history. Grace passed away on July 22 in Ames at age 96. Her video interview is in the History Center's collection and may be watched at the History Center or checked out and viewed at home.



## Pieced Fabric: Historic Quilts

The Society is partnering with the Octagon Center for the Arts to present an exhibit of historic quilts. It will run from August 18 to October 28 at 427 Douglas. Throughout the years, the Ames Historical Society has added a number of beautiful quilts to our collection - many from long-time Ames residents. For the exhibit, a handful of quilts were chosen based on their unique stories, interesting designs, functions and fabric history. Though each tells a different story, all share the story of being made and used in Ames. Quilts also speak to the story of women and quilting and quilting as an art form.

## Mighty Rescue Crew

Hannah Frederick, Collections Manager, has been processing the Bert and Mary Adams bequest this summer. Mary Adams left the contents of her historic home to the Society. It included many artworks in addition to an array of other items. On June 12, a group called the Mighty Rescue Crew came to help. Three individuals are part of the Midwest Registrar's Committee. All three are either Collections Managers or registrars at other museums. They helped to catalog, tag and photograph numerous pieces in the Adams art collection.



A group of 4H Club members who were in Ames for their annual state conference also helped by inventorying Bert Adams' hundreds of books. We have enjoyed the

volunteerism of 4Hers for a number of years.

## Society Awarded Grants

The Society was awarded a \$5,000 Historical Resource Development Program grant (HRDP) from the State Historical Society of Iowa. The grant will support collections management. It will purchase a new air conditioner for our secondary storage space, a humidifier, dehumidifier, temperature monitoring system, archival boxes, rolled storage rack and tagging materials. The Collection Manager's goal is to have everything in that storage area in appropriate boxes, tagged, cataloged and photographed.



The second exciting part of the grant will allow us to purchase PastPerfect Online. PastPerfect is the Society's collections cataloguing software. This will mean that members of the public can take a peek at and search for some of the artifacts in our collection via our website.

This year, the State Historical Society of Iowa awarded \$535,726 to museums, historical organizations and others for 27 projects in 25 communities across 21 Iowa counties. Since 1990, the program has awarded more than \$16 million to 1,200 historical projects to conserve museum collections, microfilm newspapers, preserve photographs, install exhibits, survey historic neighborhoods, nominate buildings and districts to the National Register of Historic Places and more.

## Rummage Rampage

Each year around the end of July, apartment leases end for Iowa State students living off campus. The town is typically awash with discarded furniture and household goods, many items simply left on the curb.



For the second consecutive year, ISU's Sustainability Office has organized a big rummage sale in the city's campustown parking ramp. Donors can drop off goods and folks needing items can shop at reasonable prices.

This year, the proceeds will be divided among area non-profits - including the Ames Historical Society. The project has been very successful, keeping furniture out of the landfill and providing charities with needed funds - a happy solution!

(Ames Tribune photo)

### Summerfest Fun

The Society participated in SummerFest, the annual summer celebration in Campustown. A dress up photo booth was a huge success! The vintage store, Random Goods (on Main Street) let us borrow clothing from different eras, enhanced by mustache cut-outs, hats and props such as old telephones. Below is a young couple dressed up and posing.



### Ames High Exhibit Up Next

Opening in November, the next major exhibit at the History Center will focus on Ames High School and the staff has put out a call for school-related artifacts. One of the more interesting donations was a megaphone used in the 1965-era by the White Shirt Section, a boys' cheering unit that was seated next to the girls' Pep Club in the bleachers. The megaphone was signed by all participants. A Pep Club vest was also donated with its orange fabric "A." Mementoes are still being sought. If you have Ames High artifacts, photographs, and/or memories you would like the staff to consider, call 515-232-2148 or email [info@ameshistory.org](mailto:info@ameshistory.org).



### Munn Vintage Clothing



Another unique donation to the collection was received from Erik and Joy Munn. They donated numerous Munn family textiles including a quilt, women's clothing, men's clothing and a tapestry. The clothing appears to be mostly from 1900-1920 (above), but a few items are from the late 1800s. The Munns have been in Ames since 1890.

### July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade



Again this year, the Society's History Trailer rolled through the July 4 parade on Main Street. It was a warm and sunny summer day and thousands attended the festive event. The parade is eagerly anticipated by local residents – especially since so many of their friends and neighbors appear in parade units. Left to right are Board members Ardy Ulrichson and Ryan Riley, and his wife and child.

### We Get Questions!

The Society's Research & Media Specialist, Alex Fejfar, is often the person who answers patrons' questions. He shared a few examples of recent interactions:

A visitor came in looking for her grandfather's birth record from Washington township, Ames, Iowa. We were able to find the birth announcement in the Ames Tribune and they were relieved and very pleased to save themselves a futile trip to Washington, Iowa!

An Old-Town Neighborhood homeowner contacted us hoping to find information about his back porch for a restoration project. We were able to find his house on a Sanborn Fire Insurance Map in our collection and noticed the porch was not originally enclosed.

The Des Moines Heritage Trust is restoring the Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern's (FDDM&S) depot in Valley Junction (West Des Moines). It is a "sister" depot to the one in Ames that was located at



Grand and Lincoln Way. We provided photos and information to aid in their restoration.

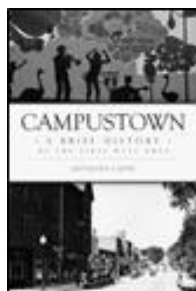
An out-of-town visitor popped in to find the location of his grandfather's farm and said that he had heard it was part of Iowa State College. His grandfather turned out to be Daniel Zumwalt and the farm was the Zumwalt Station stop on the FDDM&S's interurban trolley south of Ames. The farm was later sold to Iowa State for a research farm.

Ames Historical Society  
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Ames, Iowa 50010

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## Museum Shop



**THE ENTIRE SHOP** may be viewed on our new website – browse and order online!  
[www.ameshistory.org](http://www.ameshistory.org)

### THREE NEW BOOK TITLES:

A Culinary History of Iowa; Younkers, the Friendly Store;  
Campustown: a Brief History of the First West Ames.

### A NEW SUPPLY OF ONONDAGA COFFEE:

The Shop has restocked our popular Onondaga Blend coffee, roasted especially for the Society by Burgie's Coffee in Ames. Combine a bag with a handmade pottery coffee mug for a great hostess gift.

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Open hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm



*A visitor (right) to Sharon Wirth's (left) July 30 program at Hoggatt School about Civil War-era clothing got to try on a hoop skirt.*

### Is it time to renew your membership?

Renewals are due on the one-year anniversary of last year's payment. Check this newsletter's label (above your name) for the date yours is due. Memberships fund the day-to-day operations of the Society, so we can continue to be a valued community resource. Now – pay online at our updated website!

Introductory - 1st year	\$15	Partner	\$250
Basic	\$30	Benefactor	\$500
Friend	\$50	Patron	\$1,000
Sustaining	\$100		

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Ames Historical Society, PO Box 821, Ames, IA 50010**